

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 215163
ORIGIN HEW-06

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INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

UNCLAS STATE 215163

FOR ATTENTION OF REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, ETRD, TBIO, IT

SUBJECT: GOI NOTE REQUESTS INFORMATION ON U.S.
CERTIFICATION OF FISH AND SEAFOOD COMMODITIES FOR EXPORT TO
ITALY

REF: ROME 12110

FDA COMMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. THERE IS NO GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY IN THE UNITED STATES
WHICH ISSUES CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN AND HEALTH FOR SEAFOOD
SHIPMENTS, EITHER DOMESTIC OR EXPORT. FDA ADMINISTERS THE
FEDERAL FOOD, DRUG, AND COSMETIC ACT, WHICH APPLIES TO FOODS
GENERALLY, INCLUDING SEAFOODS, WHICH ARE IN INTERSTATE
COMMERCE IN THE UNITED STATES OR BEING IMPORTED OR EXPORTED.
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CERTIFICATION IS NOT REQUIRED UNDER THIS ACT. INSTEAD, IT
IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEEK OUT AND TAKE APPROPRIATE LEGAL
ACTION AGAINST SHIPMENTS WHICH ARE IN CONFLICT WITH THE
PROVISIONS OF THE ACT. ASIDE FROM THE FACT THAT WE DO NOT
HAVE AUTHORITY TO ISSUE CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN AND HEALTH,
IT WOULD TAKE AN ENORMOUS INCREASE IN THE FUNDS AND OTHER
RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO US TO EXAMINE AND CERTIFY ALL EXPORT

SHIPMENTS OF SEAFOOD, AND WOULD NECESSARILY BE AT THE

EXPENSE OF WORK OF SUBSTANTIALLY MORE IMPORTANCE. THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE, ISSUES GRADE CERTIFICATES ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS FOR INDIVIDUAL LOTS OF SEAFOOD, FOR WHICH THE PERSON DESIRING THE CERTIFICATE MUST PAY. THESE CERTIFICATES ARE CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS FOR GRADES ISSUED BY THAT AGENCY, RATHER THAN CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN AND HEALTH.

2. SEAFOODS ARE SUBJECT TO THE SAME REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE FD&C ACT AS OTHER FOODS. STATED GENERALLY, THIS ACT REQUIRES FOODS TO BE SAFE, CLEAN, WHOLESOME ARTICLES, HONESTLY AND INFORMATIVELY LABELED. REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED UNDER THIS ACT AND WILL BE FOUND IN TITLE 21, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS.

3. THE METHOD CURRENTLY USED FOR PARALYTIC SHELLFISH POISON (GONYAULAX) TOXIN(S) WILL BE FOUND IN OFFICIAL METHODS OF ANALYSIS" OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS, 12TH EDITION, BEGINNING ON PAGE 319. THIS BOOK OF METHODS IS PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF OFFICIAL ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS, P. O. BOX 540, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN STATION, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20044. WE THINK IT LIKELY THE LABORATORIES OF GOI ALREADY HAVE THIS BOOK OF METHODS. A METHOD FOR THE BIOASSAY OF GYNMODINIUM BREVE TOXIN(S) UNCLASSIFIED

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IN SHELL FISH WILL BE FOUND BEGINNING ON PAGE 61 OF "RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR THE EXAMINATION OF SEA WATER AND SHELLFISH", FOURTH EDITION, 1970, PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION, INC., 1015 18TH STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036.

4. A METHOD FOR HISTAMINE AND HISTAMINE-LIKE SUBSTANCES, WHICH SOMETIMES PRESENT PROBLEMS WITH SCOMBROID AND SCOMBROID-LIKE FISHES, WILL BE FOUND BEGINNING ON PAGE 315 OF THE AOAC BOOK OF METHODS, 12TH EDITION. THERE ARE NO ESTABLISHED METHODS FOR TETRODOTOXINS (PUFFER POISON), NOR FOR CIGUATERA POISON WHICH OCCURS IN A VARIETY OF SPECIES OF VERTEBRATE FISH, USUALLY FROM TROPICAL OR WARM WATER AREAS OF THE WORLD. RESEARCH ON BOTH TETRODOTOXIN AND CIGUATERA POISONS, INCLUDING METHODOLOGY, IS BEING CONDUCTED IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES. MOST WORK ON THE TETRODOTOXINS HAS BEEN DONE IN JAPAN.

5. WE DO NOT HAVE A LIST OF ALL EDIBLE FISH, MOLLUSKS, AND OTHER SHELLFISH EXPORTED FROM THE U.S., NOR DO WE KNOW OF ANY OTHER AGENCY WHICH DOES HAVE INFORMATION IN THIS DETAIL. IN ANY EVENT, THE INFORMATION WOULD BE SUBJECT TO

THE WEAKNESS THAT SPECIES, NOT NOW EXPORTED, MIGHT BE

EXPORTED IN THE FUTURE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF THE TRADE ASSOCIATIONS IN THE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY, SUCH AS THE NATIONAL FISHERY INSTITUTE, 1730 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., WASH., D.C. MAY HAVE SOME LIMITED INFORMATION CONCERNING SPECIES EXPORTED, BUT WE THINK IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT THEY WILL HAVE THE DETAILED INFORMATION REQUESTED.

6. BIVALVE SHELLFISH (OYSTERS, CLAMS, AND MUSSELS) ARE SUBJECT IN THE UNITED STATES TO THE NATIONAL SHELLFISH SANITATION PROGRAM. THIS IS A COOPERATIVE PROGRAM BETWEEN THE FDA, THE INDIVIDUAL STATES OF THE UNITED STATES, AND THE SHELLFISH INDUSTRY. THE ACTUAL PROGRAM, AND THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CERTIFICATION OF SHIPPERS, IS CONDUCTED BY THE INDIVIDUAL STATES. THIS DOES NOT, HOWEVER, INVOLVE CERTIFICATION OF INDIVIDUAL SHIPMENTS ON A LOT BY LOT BASIS. CERTIFICATION OF THE ADEQUACY OF THE STATES' PROGRAMS IS DONE BY FDA. THIS PROGRAM IS CONCERNED BOTH WITH THE SANITATION AND THE SAFETY OF THE SHELLFISH, AND PROVIDES FOR THE CLOSING OF AREAS WHICH ARE POLLUTED, OR WHICH PRODUCE SHELLFISH CONTAMINATED WITH NATURAL OR MAN-MADE TOXIN VANCE

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